

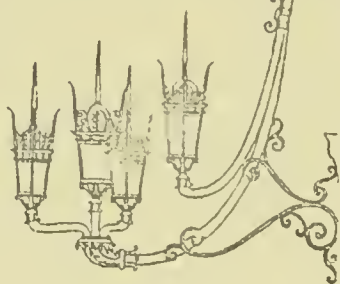
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PARK PLAZA URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

FINAL PROJECT REPORT

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(2nd Submission)

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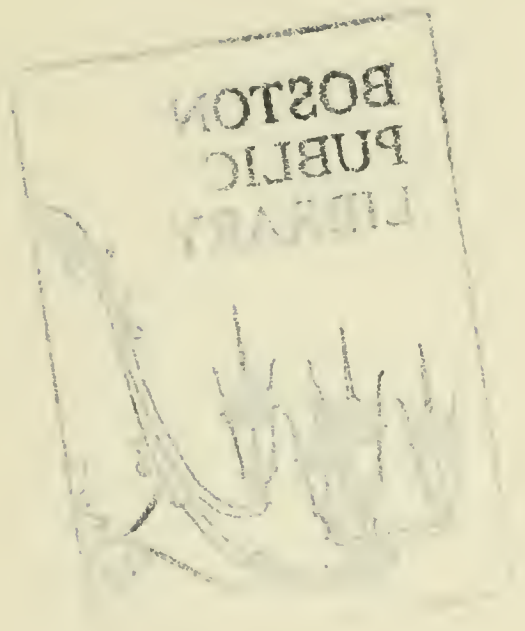
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

November, 1972







## PART 1

### The Physical Environment

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④ Elimination of the Present Negative

1. The Project is a decadent area

The Project Area is "decadent" as defined in Chapter 121B: "A decadent area ... is an area which is detrimental to the safety, health and morals and sound growth of the community, because of the existence of buildings which are out of repair, physically deteriorated, ... or obsolete, and in need of major maintenance and repair, and because buildings have been torn down and not replaced and under existing conditions it is improbable that the buildings will be replaced; and because of diversity of ownership, irregular lot sizes and obsolete street patterns make it improbable that the area will be redeveloped by the ordinary operation of private enterprise."

More specifically, decadence is illustrated by the following:

- a. Engineering surveys showed that 68% of the buildings in the project area either are out of repair, physically deteriorated, obsolete or in need of major maintenance and repair. The deficiencies were found to be distributed throughout the Project Area.
- b. 81% of the buildings in the Project Area were built prior to 1890 and are of non-fireproof construction.
- c. The buildings at the corner of Park Square and Boylston Street have been torn down for almost a decade now and there is no sign of renewal taking place.
- d. The project area contains 150 parcels of diverse ownership. It would be most difficult for private ownership to assemble developable parcels.
- e. In addition, 77% of the parcels are less than 5,000 square feet, including 61% less than 3,000 square feet.





f. No new development has taken place in the Project Area since the construction of the Statler Hilton Hotel in the 1930's. The only apparent recent renewal has been the reconstruction after a fire of a small bus terminal coffee shop and the construction of another small structure on an old foundation to service a rental car operation.

g. The diverse ownership together with the irregular lot sizes plus the obvious obsolete and unworkable street patterns, particularly in the first stage of the project, make it most improbable that the area would be developed by the ordinary operation of private enterprise.

## 2. The Project contains undesirable environmental conditions

In addition to the physical blight identified above, the project contains numerous environmental conditions and land uses which are inappropriate and should be eliminated:

- a. existing sewer and water systems installed as early as the 19th century;
- b. a confusing, dangerous street system;
- c. a land use arrangement uninviting and in places hostile to pedestrians;
- d. empty lots and unattractive uses in the heart of the city; and
- e. an inappropriately located bus terminal creating traffic congestion and other negative conditions

## 3. The Project Area has a negative impact on the surrounding area

The areas surrounding Park Plaza contain a wide mix of activities. To the west one finds the important retail district of Boylston and Newbury Streets, office buildings along Boylston Street, in Copley Square and in the Prudential Center, hotels, and the residential areas of Back Bay. To the north, on the other side of the Public Garden and





Common, are the residences of Beacon Hill. To the east and northeast are the major downtown retail district, older office buildings, and the new office towers of the financial district. To the south are two hotels, the Bay Village residential area, theatres and a new medical complex.

The Project Area has a negative effect on these important city activities in the following ways.

a. The Boston Common was established soon after the first settlers of the city arrived in 1630. In its early years, the Common provided public space for grazing, parades, and general gatherings. Since 1830, when the first mall of trees and walkways was introduced, the Common has become principally a green oasis of 50 acres within the City, a place for the public to enjoy visually and in which to sit and walk. The establishment of the 24 acre Public Garden in 1839 extended the open green space and provided a more elaborate botanical garden for the enjoyment of Bostonians.

Today these great urban open spaces offer area for rest and relaxation within the inner city. The open quality, the walks, the grass, the trees, the historic monuments, and the water features all add to the immense value of this amenity. It can, in fact, be said that these open spaces are the very expression of the city itself and the potential level of amenity of that urban life can offer. Boston's heritage and traditions are symbolized by the Common and the Public Gardens, which must be protected.

Presently both the Common and Public Gardens require a program of rehabilitation both to restore original items of historic integrity and to meet the recreational demands of the seventies and beyond.

The deterioration and blight in the Park Plaza Project Area have had and continue to have undesirable effects, in terms of appearance,



of adjacent uses, of traffic safety, and of the quality of urban design, on the Common and Public Garden. Visually, the facade presented to the Garden is broken by open spaces, deteriorated buildings, and oversize signs. The area is used for "adult entertainment," with activities spilling out into Boylston Street. Vehicles and pedestrians are caught in congestion because of the irregular street connections, because of bus and rental traffic, and because of the back-up at outmoded parking lots and garages. Non-descript buildings, vacant land, and a hostile pedestrian environment form the character of the area and diminish the role that the Common and Garden can play. These recreation areas will continue to provide valuable recreation for thousands each day only if the negative elements just cited can be eliminated.

b. Evidence has been presented that all areas within Park Plaza's boundaries are blighted and deteriorating. In summary, there is no visible or real connection between the Boylston-Newbury and Washington Street retail centers. The Project Area effectively separates South Cove from the Winter Street-Summer Street area, increases deterioration in adjacent commercial Chinatown, and detracts from the Tremont Street entertainment district. The adjacent residential areas of Back Bay, Bay Village, and South Cove are less desirable because of the character of Park Square today.

4. The project will not eliminate any buildings of significant historical or architectural merit

The project will not eliminate any buildings of significant historical or architectural merit. The present area developed commercially, in a haphazard manner, relatively late in Boston's history. The Tavern Club buildings of the 1830's, of sociological





interest, do remain, while most of the earlier non-commercial buildings have long been demolished. When the filling of Back Bay was nearly complete in 1855, the predominant structure was the Greek revival row house. The remodeled buildings of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union are the only example of this style which remains in the Park Plaza area. Beacon Hill, however, has many fine examples. Between 1875 and 1900 the character of the whole area changed as commercial structures became predominant. The narrow, five-story Hayden Building on the corner of Washington Street was designed by H. H. Richardson in 1875. The building is not of interest to students of his work because of the party walls with two abutting buildings and the modernized facade. The Boylston Building, with its outstanding interior arcade is still handsome today. Other buildings and courtyards can be described as "pleasant" but are totally surrounded by unattractive activities -- the back of a bus terminal, rear of commercial structures, vacated stores.

Because of the wide spacing of the good buildings in the area, their retention is not practical. None of the buildings in the area can stand alone as an architectural or historical monument. The Liberty Tree plaque at 630 Washington Street, however, will be preserved and the site marked.

## B. The New Environment

### 1. General Design Objectives

The general design objectives are:

- a. To create multi-use new structures, with the lower elements built close to the street lines so as to maintain the urban character.





- b. To provide a series of high-rise structures spaced apart as a continuation of the "high spine" of Boston.
- c. To build with materials whose color and scale relate well to the existing Boston architecture of Back Bay, Beacon Hill, and Bay Village.
- d. To integrate, as to scale and activity, the new development with the surrounding areas -- especially in the relationship of the buildings and uses along Boylston Street to the adjacent Boston Common and Public Garden.
- e. To provide multi level attractive and continuous pedestrian areas through the Project with maximum separation and convenient interfacing with other transportation modes (transit, taxi, auto, pedestrian).
- f. To eliminate excess and confusing roadways and replace them with an efficient, safe, and adequate new road system based on the overall proposed downtown traffic plan.
- g. To prevent the haphazard redevelopment of this important sector of Boston which would occur through unplanned renewal based upon the present street layout and pattern of privately-owned parcels.

## 2. Planning Concepts

- a. Emphasis on pedestrian level--Boston as a walking city, e.g. pedestrian mall all the way through; plaza; nature of uses at pedestrian level; 16-hour a day activities; obligation of stores, cafes, entertainment centers to remain open and lit during the evening.



b. Elements of planning require unified design, e.g. parking in the rear for entire program; no parking and traffic entrances or exits on Boylston Street; a plaza; pedestrian mall all the way through; separation of vehicular from pedestrian traffic by the use of underground service roads; consistency of architectural materials and design, control of maintenance and security; control of uses which complement each other and employ direct interconnecting access, e.g., access of hotel to shopping area; extension of the concept of the park area (a) on to the plaza; (b) in to the pedestrian mall; and (c) on to the set back of the low rise office building at the 125 foot level, all through development of extensive greenery, planting and unified design concept.

### 3. Ecological Considerations

a. Shadows: the effect of shadows on trees, shrubs, and flowers in both the Public Garden and Boston Common; and the effect of shadows on people's enjoyment of these public open spaces and alterations to their patterns of use.

b. Winds: the effect of winds created by towers upon vegetation in the Common and Garden; the effect of winds on pedestrians in each of the streets surrounding the project area; and the effect of winds on pedestrians within the project area itself, especially the pedestrian plazas and open spaces.

c. Soil Erosion: the effects of construction on the water table; the effects on nearby foundations; the problem of settling.

d. Air Exhaust: the patterns of air exhaust from project buildings; and possibility of air pollution or thermal pollution.

e. Increased Numbers of Pedestrians in the Project Vicinity: the effect of increased pedestrian traffic as wear and tear on the



Public Garden and Boston Common; possible conflict points between increased pedestrian volume and major vehicular streets.

f. Increased Vehicular Circulation: will increased vehicular circulation create more on-street parking in Bay Village and other parts of South Cove; the effect upon pedestrians in the vicinity of Park Plaza of increased air pollution due to more vehicular traffic; and the effect of this increased air pollution on vegetation in the Public Garden and Boston Common.

g. The Effect Upon Existing City Services and Utility Systems of Increased Demand: sewers, both sanitary and storm; water service, both low and high pressure; solid waste disposal; and fire protection.

#### 4. Environmental Safeguards

a. The Developers shall engage a wind consultant to submit all reports as wind studies progress. (Mount Auburn Research Associates has been engaged.)

b. The Design Review process will focus particularly on design aspects that will affect the environment of not only the project area but of the surrounding environs: impact of shadows, traffic, both vehicular and pedestrian, connections through the project area, the interrelation of the design to its neighbors and provision for all-weather enclosed walkways and public spaces.

c. BRA will retain an independent environmental consultant; to this end, the Authority has begun interviewing consultants.

d. Park Plaza foundation design must arrive at the most economical system of foundations to support the buildings, with a conservative degree of safety, and also insure that the foundation system selected and the methods used during construction will in no way damage or weaken neighboring streets, utilities, and buildings. The developers





have engaged several different specialists to do the engineering necessary to satisfy these requirements. (Davis, Brody and Associates, design architect; Golder Gass Associates, geotechnical engineers; LeMessurier Associates, structural engineers.) A consultant has been engaged to measure within and around the project area to determine whether the Park Plaza construction has caused any movement or change in elevation (Harry R. Feldman, Inc., civil engineers and surveyers.) All of the above consultants have extensive experience within the Back Bay area.

#### (1) Procedures in Foundation Design

-- A general study of topographical and subsurface conditions for downtown Boston will be conducted. A history of the Park Plaza area including use of fill and previous land use and a comparison with other sites in Boston and Back Bay will be made.

-- A series of preliminary borings are made to develop a profile of subsurface conditions.

-- Recommendations are made for a suitable foundation design and the approximate cost of constructing an entirely safe foundation system is determined.

-- A more detailed boring program at the locations of the proposed foundations is carried out.

-- A final foundation design is developed. The design includes the methods of construction and specifies the precautions necessary to protect the neighboring streets, utilities and structures.

#### (2) Soil Conditions

The boring program revealed the following stratigraphy. Below existing ground surface is a loose, sandy fill with some ash, brick, and concrete, with a minimum thickness of 5.5 feet at



Charles Street at Stuart and a maximum of 24 feet to the northwest. Underlying the fill are deposits of organic silt and peat, in some areas, and a complex sequence of layers varying from silty clay to dense sand and silt, throughout. A dense glacial till deposit consisting of gravel, sand and silt from 22 to 55 feet in thickness lies above bedrock, which is found from 150 to 160 feet below ground surface. Groundwater levels are within about 15 feet of ground surface. (report of Golder Gass Associates)

e. The second stage development plan (parcels 4 and 5) will be submitted to the D.C.A.

#### 5. The Design for Park Plaza ✓

The first stage development (parcels 1, 2, and 3) consists of a series of five towers of varying height which spring from a connected group of lower buildings.

Three of the towers, an 800 to 1,000 room hotel and two luxury apartment structures, are grouped around a public plaza near the center of the site at the corner of Charles Street and Boylston Street. The other two are located at the east and west ends of the site respectively: one, a moderate income apartment building is at the Tremont Street, Stuart Street intersection, and the other, a 600,000 square foot office building is at the Boylston Street, Arlington Street corner, where it is directly related to the MBTA station.

The towers are designed and located with respect to one another so as to gain maximum exposure to the views of the Boston Common and Public Garden. This configuration serves to create a unified composition, distinct as a total new development, while at the same time, relating to existing buildings, street patterns and neighborhoods.

At the grade level two public pedestrian facilities are the key





elements of the design: an enclosed, weather conditioned, multi-level arcade, and the open public plaza.

The arcade which extends the entire length of the site, gives access to all uses within the project. At its western portion, along Boylston Street, the arcade is enclosed with glass, overlooking the Public Gardens on one side, and lined with shops, restaurants and cafes on the other side. Escalators move pedestrians to upper levels of the arcade and allow unimpeded movement above Charles Street to the eastern portion of the site where connection will be made to the Public Plaza and to the future development across Tremont Street.

The plaza is the focal point of the plan, opening the amenities of the hotel, apartments, shops and restaurants which surround it to the Public Garden and Boston Common.

The design for parcel 4 and 5 has not yet been established but will be made to conform to the general design objectives, the Land Use and Building Controls specified in the Urban Renewal Plan and the ecological considerations set forth above.

#### 6. The scale of the surrounding areas

The scale of development proposed for Park Plaza is entirely consistent with the guidelines which have been established for new development in the City of Boston. These guidelines call for intense development along what is known as the high spine, a linear corridor paralleling Boylston Street from Prudential Center to Washington Street and then turning north through the financial district to the Government Center, roughly coinciding with the main rapid transit routes. The Prudential Center, the New and Old Hancock Buildings, and the Tufts New England Medical Center are elements already in place on the east-west arm of this corridor.



Controls have been imposed to insure that the Plan respects scale on a more intimate or pedestrian level. For example, except for less than 20% of the frontage where towers emerge, the cornice height along Boylston Street has been limited to 150 feet, compatible with the heights of the older buildings which will remain. The pedestrian arcade will maximize the view of the Garden by adding visual enjoyment of the area in inclement weather. The central plaza also extends the open space of the Garden into the project area.

The architectural plan has been reviewed and endorsed by the Design Advisory Committee to the Authority (a group of eminent local architects). The Authority review will continue throughout the period of redevelopment. (Kenney testimony, April 11, 1972). To this end the Authority has insisted upon a design review process which includes approval of several stages of design submission from schematics through final drawings.

It is entirely appropriate, indeed essential, to develop a multi-use complex here, with major elements reflecting almost all the uses found in the immediately adjacent neighborhoods. Park Plaza will connect the nearby entertainment and educational districts to the central business district. The pedestrian way will provide access to Beach Street and form an important link between Back Bay and the downtown retail center. The project will strengthen Lower Washington Street by upgrading the Park Square area. This new development will become an integrating and mixing element providing a transition from each of the surrounding neighborhoods to the next.



## 7. Effect on the Boston Common and Public Garden

The effect of Park Plaza on the Boston Common and Public Garden has been the subject of considerable study and discussion. The protection of the Common and Garden has long been a vital concern of the Authority and the City. Protection of these areas in the future is difficult because of the already weakened condition of the plant materials in the urban environment and because of the overuse of several sections at present.

The creation of shadows has been carefully studied and reviewed before the Authority and the City Council. Shadows will make almost no penetration during the late spring and summer, will have only a minor effect in early spring and late fall (less than 5% coverage at any one time in the area with the area covered changing continually throughout the day), and will cover significant but changing portions of these parks only during late November, December and January, when park usage is lowest and no growth takes place. A series of nine diagrams indicating the shadows at various times of the day and year, prepared by Davis, Brody and Associates, documents these conclusions (City Council hearings).

Excessive artificial wind will affect and possibly damage plant materials. While it is true that tall buildings alter and amplify wind currents, these effects can be predicted through wind tunnel tests conducted during the design process and can be controlled accordingly. The Authority has made this a requirement of the design review process.

Sudden or excessive raising or lowering of the water table could affect root strength and growth. By use of a recharging well the





developers can maintain the level of the water table and thus protect trees in the area. All of the necessary precautions must be listed in the foundation design.

Most experts, including those testifying on behalf of the Friends of the Public Garden, agree that the shadow and wind effect are not sufficient reasons along to warrant rejection of the project. Review of the design and its effects on the adjacent public areas will continue throughout the design review process, and the developer will be required to take the necessary steps to protect the surrounding environment. The massing and height of buildings will be controlled in order to control the size of the shadows cast. A wind consultant has been hired to measure wind factors and to provide recommendations for their control. Pedestrian movement through the parks will be controlled by providing an attractive alternative in the public spaces and pedestrian ways of the new development. A landscape architect is studying the requirements for construction and maintenance in the Garden and Common, and the City is pledged to carry out a restoration program over the next few years. While Park Plaza has focused attention on the Public Garden and Common, these areas need attention and investment whether or not this Plan is approved.

It is not Park Plaza but rather inattention which represents a real threat to their future. To this end the Authority has required the developer to invest a portion of the project's art fund, amounting to 1% of the total construction costs, in improvements to the Public Garden and Common. The Authority engaged Carol R. Johnson and Associates to take the first major step in protecting the Garden and Common. This study identified existing conditions and problems, and then set priorities for the City's affirmative actions.



## 8. Other Physical Improvements

Inherent to the Park Plaza plan is the relocation and reconstruction of streets and utilities. Especially important will be the creation of a new Charles Street, replacing the confusing and dangerous pattern of present Park Square, and the widening of Stuart and Kneeland Streets. New lighting, police, fire and traffic signals and water and sewer facilities will replace existing outmoded and insufficient utility systems originally installed as long ago as the 19th century.

The plan also calls for a new pedestrian circulation system through the area, a system which will provide an enclosed climate controlled, traffic free passage from Arlington to Washington Streets.

-- A new public square will be created between Boylston and Stuart Streets at Charles Street. This square will face the Public Garden and Common to the north and the South Cove to the south and be surrounded by stores, restaurants and cafes, creating activity sixteen hours per day. Kiosks, exhibits, sculpture and outdoor dining areas will create a human and active square rather than a stiff ceremonial plaza.

Funds have already been allocated to the MBTA for improvements to the rolling stock and signalization of the Green Line which serves Park Plaza. The MBTA says that these improvements should alleviate the peak hour problems which will result from increased development activity in the Back Bay, including Park Plaza. It is recognized that this expenditure will not obviate the need for additional improvements to the Green Line in future years, and the MBTA says that it has recognized this requirement in its master plan for the future.

Certain aspects of the Park Plaza development are beneficial to improved rapid transit service:. Residential, retail and hotel uses create nonpeak hour ridership which lead to a more efficient utilization



of MBTA facilities and equipment. But the effort to improve rapid transit service through a combination of local and federal funds must be continued.

The developer has retained Barton Aschman as traffic consultants to the project. This firm has been involved in transportation planning throughout Boston and is well qualified to study not only the local problems of Park Plaza but the project's compatibility with the entire Boston road network. They studied the street capacities to determine the maximum allowable development program and the proposed development plan is consistent with that study. The consultants concluded that the project can be designed "to incorporate the facilities and operating characteristics needed to provide a balanced transportation system which meets the needs of the City of Boston, the neighborhoods around the site, and the development itself."

They further state that "the street network serving the site together with the proposed alignment and cross section changes to such streets as Stuart, Charles and Providence provides the required capacity to carry the increased traffic."

The Project will improve traffic flow by replacing the present antiquated street pattern with more direct routes. The primary change will be in the area of Park Square itself where New Charles Street will be constructed to provide straight north-south traffic flow through the Project area. Also, -- an underground road and loading dock system separating vehicular activity and truck and service access from pedestrian traffic will be developed.

The Project was reviewed as to its traffic impact for the





Transportation Secretary. Several suggestions were made which were in line with staff thinking and the review concluded:

"The above reactions and suggestions are not meant as criticism of what appears to be a well thought out and programmed plan for development of this area. My overall reaction to Park Plaza is very positive. There should be substantial benefits to the City of Boston and to the metropolitan area in the revitalization of this section."



PART II

THE SOCIAL IMPACT

CONTENTS

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  - 2. Special Problems
  
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  - 2. Scale of the City
  - 3. Level of Amenity
  - 4. Increases in Residential Choices
  - 5. Adjacent Communities



## A. RELOCATION IMPACT OF PARK PLAZA

A relocation plan is part of the Urban Renewal Plan and a relocation report was previously submitted. The report shows the administrative and organizational ability of the Authority to carry out relocation, set relocation policy and payments, and indicates the availability of resources to successfully relocate all project residents and businesses.

### 1. Adequacy of the Relocation Plan

The recently promulgated relocation regulations of the Bureau of Relocation, Department of Community Affairs states the objectives of Chapter 79A--"the law establishes three basic protections: It requires as a minimum, (1) that moving expenses be paid; (2) that all programs displacing more than five families and/or businesses must provide relocation assistance through a qualified agency, and (3) that a plan submission must demonstrate that successful relocation is feasible."

Park Plaza will provide relocation benefits to displaced residents and businesses in amounts as great as have been paid in any other urban renewal project in the State. The developer will be required to deposit the funds to be used for relocation payments before any land acquisition or tenant displacement begins.

Detailed and specific information on residential and commercial relocatees in Parcels 1, 2, and 3, including space requirements and available resources, has been prepared and reviewed with the Bureau of Relocation.

A detailed relocation submission for parcels D & E will be submitted before any steps are taken to begin acquiring the existing buildings in those parcels.

### 2. Special Problems

Although relocation of liquor licenses is difficult, it is not always impossible. In addition, the City of Boston had a Liquor License Retire-





ment Bill, from January, 1966 through 1969. This enabled Licensees, displaced by Urban Renewal to retire their license for a payment up to \$10,000. The Mayor recently submitted a new Liquor License Retirement Bill to the Boston City Council. This bill is being actively supported by the Retail Liquor Dealers Association. It is interesting to note that while 83 licenses were being retired because of Urban Renewal, 122 licenses were retired in other parts of the City of Boston, outside of renewal area. These 122 licenses were not eligible for any payment under the Liquor License Retirement Bill.

The Seamen's Friends Society is a difficult relocation problem. Because of the uncertainty of final approval of the Plan, no locations have been offered as yet. The Authority is endeavoring at this time, to ascertain what buildings might be available that are suitable for this unique situation. Efforts have been underway for some time, to achieve the successful relocation of the Bus Terminal.

#### B. SOCIAL REVITALIZATION

The social climate and livability of a city is dependent upon its ability to attract people of all types and income levels to live, visit and work within its borders. The multi-use character of Park Plaza breaks with a tradition that has seen new downtown development devoted to office space. Its multi-use character stresses livability and activity throughout the day, making downtown Boston a more attractive, safer, and interesting place for both residents and visitors.

The benefits described above will be gained without sacrificing or compromising any of the existing features and strengths of downtown Boston. The development has been designed to be compatible with the area in which it will be built. Specific concerns have been satisfied as follows:



## 1. Effect on Public Garden and Common

The BRA design staff and outside consultants have been concerned since the inception of Park Plaza with insuring that the development will add to the enjoyment and use of the adjacent public spaces. The attractive and continuous pedestrian areas and the extension of the concept of the park area onto the project's plaza will encourage the use of the new development for walking, lunching, and relaxing. The value of the Public Garden and Common as an amenity will increase with the removal of the blighting influences of the presently deteriorating neighborhood to the south of Boylston Street.

## 2. Scale of the City

Boston is a city that has two scales: first, it is called "a walking city" with low-scale nooks and crannies at street level, at the level of pedestrians; second, it has a high-rise scale that reflects the current growth of one of today's living American cities.

The circulation pattern of Park Plaza should reflect and reinforce this dual scale. The scheme has an interior or internal circulation system, a system of walkways and paths, of plazas and stairs and ramps for the all-day-long activities of tenants and all "walking" Bostonians. That internal system will connect directly with all the facilities in the project--hotel, stores, housing, restaurants, offices, public facilities, garages--as well as with the mass transit system. This will make the commercial district attractive to more people. Connection to the subway should be as potent as possible so as to encourage people to use MTA instead of cars for their downtown visits.

In addition, an environment will be created for those walkways as well as for those facilities and activities that will be used and enjoyed day and night. The pedestrian walks will be enclosed in glass so they can be



useful and pleasant all year long. In this way Park Plaza will enhance the character of Boston as a "walking city."

### 3. Level of Amenity

Park Plaza is almost a city within a City, and is located at the very heart of the City. It will be a new focus for people, for all the citizens of Boston--those who live in Park Plaza and those who come to it for human activity and lively urban interchange.

Park Plaza is a major urban area, an in-town, new-town, devoted primarily to residents, entertainment and hotel and retail facilities. By contrast the Government Center was substantially oriented to office buildings.

Thus Park Plaza is a unique opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to the livability of Boston by the creation of a core area center that is devoted to people and not to business and will have activities of a retail and entertainment nature, which should improve the quality of life for everybody in Boston.

This should have a great spin-off effect in residential development in Boston, such as the Government Center had on office building development. Park Plaza is a testimony to the needs of cities in the decades to come.

More than serving unmet needs, the Park Plaza will make safe and pleasant for sixteen hours a day what is now a most unattractive area.

### 4. Increases in Residential Choices

The first stage alone involves approximately 1,600 units of new housing or housing for some 4,000 people compared to only 37 occupants presently in Phase I.

The BRA surveys of the Prudential and Charles River apartments found that 60% of the people who moved into the development were from the outside of Boston. Thus, Park Plaza should help to reverse earlier patterns of wholesale migration from the City and also attract middle and upper income



people who have been particularly reticent about moving back into the City without the total environment and services offered by a project such as Park Plaza.

With the major industries of services, financial services and retail trade being the biggest industries in Boston, the significance of attracting middle- and upper-middle income people is underlined. This is particularly relevant if Boston and Massachusetts are going to be attractive to corporations not now in the City or State.

Most of the housing must necessarily be of a middle- and upper-middle income category because there is no land writedown in Park Plaza such as is available in other urban renewal projects, thereby making unfeasible a project consisting solely of moderate-income housing. Nevertheless, there will be at least 150 units of moderate-income housing.

The impact of the proposed residential community of 7,000 residents--over 4,000 new people, principally middle to upper income--cannot be underestimated. Although the 'sixties were a period of dramatic economic growth for Boston, particularly as a job center, we have always lagged behind the metropolitan area in income levels. For example, in 1970, Boston had 25% of the metropolitan area population, 40% of the jobs, 46% of the production in goods and services, but only 20% of the personal income. Our Research Department concluded a report on economic policy with the recommendation that "For the City of Boston, development and redevelopment policy should be geared to a goal of upgrading and growth to further narrow the gap in average income levels for the population and households of the city, in relation to the metropolitan area."

## 5. Adjacent Residential Communities

### a. Back Bay

Back Bay is known for the fact that over half of its population is in the student age group. Coinciding with the predominance of





students, the dwelling unit size and household size are small. About 40% of the residents of Back Bay live alone; there are few families in the area. Within the last five years 80% of the current residents have moved into Back Bay. Almost all of Back Bay is devoted to rental units, and the high vacancy rate at the time of the 1970 census reflects the transient nature of the student population. Rent levels are above average here, but the rate of increase is the same as the rate for the rest of the city. Back Bay is the residence of many professionals and managers, and the income level and level of education are correspondingly high in this community.

b. Bay Village

One fourth of Bay Village residents are in the student age group, and one fourth are over sixty years of age. More than half of the population lives alone; very few families are present. Bay Village is a changing area. Many small dwelling units have been demolished within the last ten years, and 60% of the residents have lived in the area for less than two years. Rent levels are fairly low here, but they have increased twice as fast as rent levels in most of the city.

c. Charles Street to Washington Street

The typical resident of this area is a poor adult male. Males living alone are one third of the population here. Park Plaza will displace many of these individuals and reduce the transient population in this area.

d. South Cove

South Cove is a family area, as shown by the number of children and the number of households of related individuals. About 15% of the dwelling units are owner-occupied, a figure which is high for a downtown neighborhood. Many transients live among the families: the turnover rate in small apartments is fairly high and the number of



males living alone is significant. The high vacancy rate in some parts of South Cove and the rapid rate of increase in rent levels here are related to transience.

e. Impact of the Park Plaza Development.

Park Plaza will have the immediate effect of removing the blighting influences of the Park Square area. The project will bring in services, shopping facilities, and entertainment of high quality. The housing to be built in Park Plaza is not only consistent with the needs of downtown Boston, it is also consistent with the character of the adjacent communities.



PART III  
ECONOMIC IMPACT

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A. Direct Economic Impact

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2. Tax Base
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B. City-Wide and Regional Impact

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2. Role of Park Plaza in Boston's Planning and Development Strategy To Meet the Needs of the City





## A. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT

### 1. Employment

The creation of jobs is an important benefit. Apart from the hundreds of construction jobs created during development, the first stage alone will employ approximately 7,500 people, and we estimate a total employment of 16,000 people upon total Project completion. Our survey of the Prudential Center showed that of 7,500 employees, 4,100 or 55% of them represented a direct net increase attributable to the Center. By transferring these findings to Park Plaza, we can anticipate approximately 4,100 new jobs in the first stage alone and 8,800 new jobs upon Project completion.

According to Boston Urban Associates, developers of the \$260 million privately financed plan, 1,000,000 man days of construction work will mean at least 8 years of work for more than 1,500 construction workers from in and around Boston.

In a state and metropolitan economy which is suffering, particularly from unemployment, the kinds of services provided by Park Plaza are critical.

### 2. Tax Base

As dramatic will be the increase in tax revenue, which is the primary source of funds with which the City operates. The Project Area now produces about 2.7 million in tax receipts. We estimate that, conservatively, the total redevelopment of the entire Project Area will produce over 8.5 million dollars, an increase of approximately 6 million dollars annually. The first stage alone will skyrocket from the current 1.7 million to at least 4.5 million, over 2 1/2 times the current receipts!

The tax picture is also brightened by what happens in surrounding areas of a project as reflected by Government Center. A survey of the area showed that assessed values in neighboring Beacon Hill Blocks increased 24% in the 1950-1968 Government Center building decade over the 1950-1959 decade; in the same corresponding period the city as a whole showed only a 15% increase.



### 3. Economic Revitalization

Recent development in downtown Boston has taken place at the ends of the commercial core in the Prudential Center, Copley Square, the Government Center, and the Financial District, leaving the center weak. Park Plaza represents an opportunity to create a strong, economically sound link between downtown and the Back Bay. It will add uses of great economic and social benefit.

#### a. Residential: -

The plan calls for more than 2,800 apartments with 1,600 of these units planned for the first stage. This means a population of approximately 4,000 people in the first stage alone of which 2,400 are expected to come from outside Boston and an ultimate population of 7,000 with 4,200 residents new to the city. We believe that Boston is well served if earlier patterns of wholesale migration from the city of all but the least affluent is reversed.

These new residents will represent an income level necessary to the survival of the city. Past BRA research surveys indicated that only 16% of the new population in comparable high rise apartment developments earned less than \$10,000/year and concluded with a recommendation encouraging similar developments "to further narrow the gap in average income levels for the population and households of the city, in relation to the metropolitan area."

Independent research by Gladstone Associates, Economic Consultants, indicates that central Boston will need approximately 2,100 new quality apartments per year during the 1970's. More than 60 percent of this demand will come from residents returning to downtown from the suburbs or moving into the Boston area from other cities and parts of the country. On this basis, no difficulty is foreseen in marketing 350 apartments per year over a four to five year period in Parcels 1, 2,



and 3 of Park Plaza or in continuing this apartment growth in the balance of the project in subsequent years.

It should be noted that new luxury apartments built in Boston in recent years have rented quickly and now have a vacancy rate of less than one percent.

b. Hotels: -

Conventions and tourism are the backbone of one of Boston's most important industries representing more than \$40 million in annual sales to the city's economy. The erection of a new hotel in Park Plaza is consistent with the need to strengthen this industry, enabling Boston to attract the many conventions which must now be turned away because of the lack of adequate first class accommodations. Even when no major groups are visiting, Boston is a strong hotel city enjoying one of the highest occupancy rates in the country and forced to turn away visitors at peak times of the year.

A report by the Hospitality Division of Helmsley-Spear, specialists in hotel development and management, confirms Boston's need for a new first-class convention and executive hotel to counteract the movement of hotel business out of the city and to increase intown facilities to a size sufficient to attract and house large-scale meetings and conventions. Enthusiasm for the hotel is shared by Boston's Visitor and Convention Bureau and the operators of many existing facilities who feel that the new hotel will increase overall business activity. Additional support for the feasibility of a new hotel has been provided by the many competent hotel operators actively competing to become associated with the facility.

c. Retail: -

The additional retail shopping in Park Plaza should be critically significant in improving the downtown high fashion shopping and hauling



its present erosion. This will significantly improve the competitiveness of the high fashion goods center vis a vis the suburban shopping centers and retain the retail viability of downtown Boston.

The retail cores of all major cities are threatened by competition from suburban shopping centers. A recent report by the BRA research department outlines Boston's ability to resist this trend through a combination of "the overall upgrading of the city's economy, the program of urban redevelopment, and the growth in household income levels." Park Plaza will continue broadening the base of retail customers by adding new downtown employment and new middle and upper income residents. In addition, the shopping area itself will provide the amenities required to attract suburban shoppers back into the city, re-establishing downtown as a place to spend a day shopping. This increase in traffic will help all downtown retailers.

Gladstone Associates has also studied this aspect of the complex. They predict that total retail expenditures in Boston will increase dramatically as intown employment grows, incomes increase, quality housing is built and new facilities attract suburban shoppers. Park Plaza, by connecting two strong retail areas, the Central Business District and Back Bay - Prudential, will enhance the overall attractiveness of Boston in the metropolitan and regional retail market, increasing total retail volume and sales.

d. Office: -

Boston experienced dramatic and sustained growth in office demand during the 1960's. Recent economic projections indicate that this growth will continue, supporting the feasibility of including office space in Park Plaza. In the short term, however, there has been a tremendous increase in office space supply that must be absorbed in the next 3 - 5





years. For this reason, a large portion of the office space planned in  
Parcels 1, 2, and 3 will be postponed until the second stage of develop-  
ment or until a prime tenant commitment is obtained.



I. BOSTON'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; MEETING  
THE NEEDS OF THE CITY AND ITS PEOPLE

Recent Experience and Future Prospects; The Emerging  
Development Strategy

Introduction

The City of Boston is mobilizing a new, ambitious planning and development effort to meet the needs of the City and its people. A powerful and viable strategy and plan are being shaped, and new program and project directions are already underway.

Favorable trends and prospects for the City's economy, with all that they signify for jobs and income and the upgrading of the population, provide an outstanding opportunity for social gains through planning and development. These prospects are far from assured, however. While the City's economy is prospering, the City as a place to live has lagged, and fiscal problems weigh heavily, endangering the potential for upgrading the population and the quality of urban life.

To meet these challenges, the planning and development strategy focuses on upgrading the City as a place to live, enlarging the opportunities for the population, and enhancing



the job creation and income generation role of the City. A new approach to city-wide planning and development is superceding the earlier concentration on urban renewal project planning. New program and project directions are already underway to implement Boston's emerging development strategy.

A far-reaching City Core Area planning and development program is being marshalled. A complementary neighborhood planning and development effort has been started. A new 10-year "General Plan" is being organized for the full-blown, long-term program implementation of Boston's development strategy. The new "Plan" will be the successor to the urban renewal project oriented "1965-75 General Plan".

The following statement, and related information and analyses, describe in summary fashion, how Boston's development strategy and the planning and development effort underway for its implementation, are designed to meet the needs of the City and its people. Subsequent sections of this report describe the role of Park Plaza in Boston's strategy for planning and development, and the social and environmental impact it would signify.





## A. THE ECONOMY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

Recent Evolution and Future Prospects; Its  
Relation to the Commonwealth and the Nation  
as a Whole; Role of the Services Revolution

Reversing an earlier postwar decline, Boston has been gaining jobs in the past decade. What had been a center of manufacturing and trade has emerged as a center of high-grade service activities. Since 1963, Boston has gained 60,000 service activity jobs, - more than offsetting a loss of 20,000 manufacturing jobs. The production of goods and services, (measured in dollars of constant value at 1970 prices), increased by one-third, and Boston is now a \$10 billion economy with more than 500,000 jobs. Boston's population benefited as the City's economy improved. In the course of the 1960-70 decade, Boston's households experienced a one-fourth growth in average income levels (adjusted for the rise in prices).

Prospects for the economy and the population of Boston in the 1970's are good. Boston has a specialization in those service activities that are growing rapidly in the Nation, - finance and insurance, medical service, higher education, recreation and tourism,



business services, personal services, government services. In the 1970-80 decade, Boston may experience a growth of upwards of 75,000 net new jobs and a one-third increment (a gain of more than \$3 billion) in the production of goods and services. Boston's population, in 1980, may have levels of income more than one-third higher, and will include some who have returned to the City from the suburbs. (See Table 1.)

Key to these recent gains and future prospects for Boston's economy, with all that they signify for jobs and income and the upgrading of the population and the labor force, is the "services revolution", - the rising relative role of service activities in the City and in the Nation. As service activities expanded in the Nation, responding to a rising demand for services as household incomes increased, Boston and other large cities took on a new and larger role. A shift in the structure of employment in the Nation, with the share of employment in service activities rising from 27 percent, in 1947, to 39 percent, in 1971, was mirrored by a similar



change in Boston, where service activities made up 32 percent of total employment, in 1947, and 46 percent, in 1971. Conversely, the relative role of manufacturing jobs has declined in the Nation as a whole and in Boston. For the U.S. economy, manufacturing jobs had accounted for 34 percent of all jobs in 1947, and this share fell to 26 percent by 1971. In Boston, the role of manufacturing jobs was reduced from 31 percent of all jobs, in 1947, to 20 percent, in 1971. Continuation of these patterns of growth and structural change are foreseen for the decade of the 1970's. (See Table 2.)

The rising role of service activities reflects not only the direction of growth for the City of Boston, and the Nation as a whole, but also the past and future of the economy of the Commonwealth. Since 1960, the Commonwealth has experienced a gain of more than 300,000 jobs; a growth of 300,000 jobs in services and 100,000 in trade more than offset a loss of 100,000 jobs in manufacturing. For the future, public and private



prognoses foresee a potential growth of 350,000 jobs for the Commonwealth in the 1970-80 decade. Virtually all of this growth is expected to be provided by service activities. Ambitious programs for recovery and growth in manufacturing would provide 40,000 net new jobs at best. (See Table 3.)

Boston's expanding service activity economy is important to the well-being of its metropolitan area and the State. In 1971, employment in services activities in the City of Boston made up one-third of that in the metropolitan area, and one-fifth of that in the Commonwealth. For the future, gains in jobs and reduction of unemployment in the State of Massachusetts will depend, to an important degree, on the continued advance of the role of service activities in the City of Boston.

B. EXTRAORDINARY PROSPECT AND POTENTIAL FOR THE CITY OF BOSTON OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS; COMMITMENT OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS

Not only is the outlook good for greater gains in jobs and income for Boston in this decade, in comparison with the last, but major commitments by the





public and private sectors would seem to assure an extraordinary prospect and potential over the next five years.

To assure the accommodation of the growth in service activity jobs, more than 12 million square feet of office space are under construction or planned. This compares with 7 million square feet erected in the 1960-70 decade, and contrasts with the less than 2 million square feet built between 1929 and 1960. (See Table 4.)

Responding to the market potential for housing for middle and upper income households, and the need for housing for low and moderate income families and the elderly, more than 27,000 dwelling units are under construction, planned and proposed, by private builders. This five year rate of more than 5,000 dwelling units per year compares with an average of 2,000 dwelling units per year in the period 1960-72.

Complementing the private sector commitment to the future of Boston, the City has embarked on an ambitious



public facilities program to provide the urban amenities to enhance the quality of life in the City and its neighborhoods, and to make up for the long years of neglect of Boston's urban infrastructure. This year, and for the next four years, the City is investing more than \$100 million a year in schools, parks, libraries, hospitals and health clinics, streets and lights, parks and open space, in urban renewal project areas, and in neighborhoods throughout the City. This compares with an annual rate of public facilities expenditures of \$50 million, in the 1968-71 period, when the revitalization program was begun, and with the outlay of only \$20 million a year, in the 1950-67 period, an era of woeful neglect of the City's infrastructure.

Plans for investment in public facilities in Boston by other public agencies, - the State, the Federal government, and semi-autonomous agencies -, are equally ambitious. In the course of the next 10 years, planned annual investment expenditures of the State (including transportation facilities) will exceed \$100 million,



that of the Federal government \$75 million, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority \$35 million, the Massachusetts Port Authority \$45 million, and the Metropolitan District Commission \$25 million.

Commitment to the future of Boston goes beyond erection of office buildings, construction of housing, and building of public facilities. The City is experiencing notable commercial and hotel development, with new specialty shops, department stores, restaurants, and movie houses. Since 1960, more than 4 million square feet of retail space have been added to the 20 million existing in that year, and an additional 3 to 4 million square feet are anticipated over the next several years. A virtual boom in hotel building is underway, with some 4,000 accommodations under construction, planned and proposed, over and above the 7,000 accommodations presently available.

The commitment of the public and private sectors to the future of Boston represent both a promise and a challenge. The prospects for jobs and income, growth and investment, are far from assured, however. Much



will depend on the City's progress as a place to live, the upgrading of the population and the labor force, and the solution of burdensome tax and fiscal problems.

#### C. LAG IN THE CITY AS A PLACE TO LIVE ✓

In the course of the past decade, Boston has emerged more successfully as a place to work than as a place to live. While the City's economy was undergoing a notable transformation as a high grade service activity center, with growth in jobs, Boston continued to lose population in the 1960's, albeit at half the rate of loss of the 1950's. There were two Bostons; - the Boston with 500,000 workers (including 260,000 in-commuters) whose production and productivity were higher than ever, and the Boston of 640,000 people, whose numbers had been one-fourth larger just a quarter century ago. (See Table 5.)

People continued to leave Boston in the 1960's as advances in the City's quality of life were hampered by lags in urban amenities, - housing, public facilities, education quality, safety, and declining neighborhoods. There were questions, also, on the future of the City as a place to live.

In housing, new construction and rehabilitation





lagged behind demand and needs. In the 1960-70 period, more new construction (20,000 dwelling units) had been achieved than in any recent decade, while 8,000 dwelling units had been rehabilitated, and 20,000 dwelling units, mainly sub-standard, had been demolished, removing the equivalent of one-tenth of the City's housing stock. But three-fourths of Boston's housing stock was more than a third of a century old, and much of it had been built prior to 1900. There was neither the housing to accommodate families with rising incomes, nor the housing to provide improved living conditions for the City's less privileged. (See Table 6.)

In public facilities, the City had suffered long years of neglect. At first, the theory was why build for a city in decline. After 1960, new facilities construction was curtailed in a vain effort to hold the property tax rate down. In the 1950-67 period, there was virtually no new school building; there were large numbers of structures more than 100 years old.

Many neighborhoods were in decline, including some impacted by change in population make-up, as well as some isolated from modern currents.



With lags in housing, neglect of public facilities, and decline in neighborhoods, families were continuing to leave the City.

There was a polarization of population in the City in comparison with the metropolitan area, with the City having a relative concentration of the old and the young and households with lower levels of income.

With the growth in jobs, Boston's households had been upgraded to higher levels of income in the course of the decade. Median household income rose by one-fourth, and the number of families with incomes of less than \$4,000 were reduced by one-fourth, (all measured in dollars of constant value at 1970 prices). But Boston continued to have a relative concentration of the poor; with one-fifth of all families in the metropolitan area, Boston had, in 1970, as in 1960, two-fifths of all families with incomes of less than \$4,000. And the growth in household income in Boston lagged behind the one-third growth experienced in the metropolitan area. A paradox was emerging; the number of Boston households with incomes of more than \$10,000 had increased by more than 50 percent, but the City was losing young families while gaining young singles. (See Table 7.) There was also a large rise in in-commuting as jobs expanded.



At the same time, there was evidence of a growing preference for living in Boston if suitable housing was available. A survey of the characteristics of tenants in new residential towers in Boston showed that two-thirds had not lived in Boston before. Measures of residential property market value trends showed (1) that, in at least half of Boston's neighborhoods, market values were rising as rapidly or more rapidly than in the surrounding cities and towns, and (2) that, in Boston's core area neighborhoods, market values were rising more rapidly than in surrounding cities and towns. There were signs of a reversal of the 25-year trend of population loss; preliminary results of the State population census of 1971 indicate a rise in the number of people living in Boston.

Clearly, the challenge was to enhance Boston as a place to live by providing the housing, the public facilities, the education quality, the safety and the other urban amenities that would enable those who wished to live in Boston to do so. There is the challenge to revitalize neighborhoods.

There is also the challenge to upgrade the City's population and labor force to enable them to take



fuller advantage of emerging job opportunities, by upgrading the quality of education and manpower training.

A viable Boston needs all of these things, - jobs and income upgrading, as well as housing, public facilities, and other urban amenities, - all of the factors making for revitalized neighborhoods. These are needed for all elements of Boston's diverse population, - low and moderate income families and the elderly, middle and upper income families, young singles and young marrieds, - changing neighborhoods and isolated neighborhoods.

#### D. BOSTON'S PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Boston's new planning and development strategy centers on enhancing the excellent prospects for growth of the City's economy, (with all that this signifies for job and income gains and the upgrading of the population and labor force), by making Boston as attractive a place to live as it is emerging as a place to work. Such a strategy requires a major new city-wide planning and





(a) City Core Area Strategy, Planning  
and Development

Paralleling current trends toward metropolitan area dispersion, a new process of centralization of economic activity and residential location preference is underway in the Core Area of the City of Boston. This process involves complex problems, constraints, and potential conflicts, but also holds forth a potential for achieving ambitious goals for the City and its people. The City is confronted with the challenge of meeting the needs of the people and the economy, responding to market opportunities and developer pressures, protecting the environment, safeguarding historic landmarks and historic neighborhoods, and marshalling a planning and development effort at a scale required to achieve these purposes. Furthermore, with Federal urban renewal money for land write-downs drying up, planning and development for the City Core Area must rely on a larger private sector involvement as well as



new techniques of urban development financing.

Boston's City Core, comprising the Central Area, Back Bay-Beacon Hill, Fenway-Kenmore, and the Fort Point Channel Area of South Boston, makes up only 8 percent of Boston's land area, but contains 60 percent of the City's jobs, 40 percent of the City's property value, 16 percent of the City's resident labor force and 12 percent of the City's 1970 population.

(See Table 10.) In the 1960's, the City Core Area accounted for virtually all of the 40 percent growth in net new office space (7 million square feet), and the related increase of 60,000 office jobs. The City Core Area also encompasses some of Boston's large scale urban redevelopment projects, public and private, - Government Center, Prudential Center, the Waterfront, South Cove, Fenway-Kenmore, West End and South Station. An earlier, never-implemented, CBD large-scale renewal proposal focused mainly on blighted downtown commercial areas.



Favorable recent trends and emerging opportunities suggest broad possibilities for meeting the needs of the City and the people in the Central Core Area far beyond that envisioned a decade ago. Over the next 10 years, jobs in the Core Area may increase by more than one-fourth, and 12 million square feet of office space, 3 to 4 million square feet of commercial space, and 4,000 hotel accommodations are under construction, planned or proposed to accommodate the new jobs. Preference for residing in the Core Area is burgeoning as a consequence of the expansion and location concentration of jobs, the growth in the number of job in-commuters, (some of whom would like to live in the City), the increase in number and share of the City's population made up of young singles, young marrieds, and older couples, and the rise in income levels and the capacity to pay the higher rentals of a new core area residence. Residential dwellings under construction, planned or proposed for



building over the next several years exceed 15,000 units, and represent a related population increase of 25,000 to 30,000. Responding to these pressures, residential property values in the Central Area of the City are rising more rapidly than in any other neighborhood of Boston or in the surrounding cities and towns. These pressures are complemented by large commitments of the City to revitalize Boston's Core Area public facilities, and large Boston facilities programs of the State and Federal government, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and the Metropolitan District Commission.

These recent trends and pressures present a remarkable challenge to Boston to make the most of these opportunities to meet the needs of the City while safeguarding the unique resource, that this 8 percent, some 2,600 acres, of the City's land area represents.

With this challenge in mind, the City has been fashioning a new, ambitious City Core Area strategy, planning and development effort with





a view to channelling development pressures within a framework of the public interest, and the goal of meeting the sound needs of the City. The preparation of the new City Core Area strategy and plan is well advanced and major aspects are in the developmental state. The strategy centers on encouraging and absorbing the office, commercial and hotel development, (and their significance for jobs and income), and the residential development (and their role in upgrading the City's housing and enhancing the City's population balance), while achieving important gains in blight eradication, improved urban design, revitalization of the core and its waterfront, betterment of parks, open space, recreation areas, and cultural centers, environmental protection, and the safeguarding of historic landmarks and neighborhoods.

The City Core Area is planned to provide the bulk of the City's net new jobs over the next ten years, and one-fourth to one-third of the City's new housing. These targets and related



The major new effort marshalled for neighborhood planning and development includes the following major aspects. Planning staff has been substantially augmented recently to provide a core of planners for each of the 16 "planning districts" into which the City has been divided for planning purposes. The Mayor's Office of Public Services, with its "Little City Halls", is assessing performance and requirements for services and facilities. There is a well-developed practice for community involvement, consultation and information on planning issues and programs. Analyses of the problems, needs, aspirations, alternatives and potentials are being developed, utilizing, in part, recently available information on 1960-70 trends in population, housing, and socio-economic characteristics. Public facilities program planning is being carried out at a neighborhood level. Planning work on neighborhood needs for new housing and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock is underway. Neighborhood requirements for private sector infrastructure facilities and services are being measured.



public facilities and improvements would also make it possible to achieve the larger goals for revitalization, blight eradication, open space planning, environmental upgrading, and the meeting of the vital needs of the City.

(b) Neighborhood Development Strategies,  
Planning and Development

The City of Boston and its population may be described in terms of several types of neighborhoods, - with distinctive problems, needs, potentials and alternatives. A major new city-wide neighborhood planning and development effort is underway, taking advantage of favorable prospects for upgrading, including new and rehabilitated housing, and a broad range of new public facilities construction, as well as the outlook for rising levels of income and improvement in education quality. A specific strategy is being fashioned for each neighborhood.



Private investment programs and projects underway or planned are being identified by neighborhoods. (See Exhibit 11.)

(c) Housing Development Program

An ambitious housing development program is being mounted, encompassing (1) housing needs for low and moderate income families and the elderly, (ii) a large housing market potential for middle and upper income families, and (iii) needs for upgrading and rehabilitating the City's existing housing stock. Following is a summary of the strategy and program design in each of these aspects.

(i) Housing for Low and Moderate Income  
Income Families and the Elderly

Since the initiation of housing subsidy programs in the 1930's, 30,000 public-aided dwelling units have been built in Boston for the elderly, and for low and moderate income families. This is equal to 13 percent of the housing stock. Between 1960 and 1972, some 7,725 dwelling units were constructed for this population group. As a consequence of





a redoubled effort by the City and a commendable developer response, a large number of dwelling units, - some 13,000 -, are presently under construction, planned or proposed for low and moderate income families and the elderly. Based on a preliminary assessment of need, drawing on newly available information and studies, a preliminary 10-year target of 22,000 new dwelling units for the less privileged is being formulated.

(ii) Market Potential for Housing for Middle and Upper Income Families

There is a large prospective demand for new housing for middle and upper income families as a consequence of the rise in income levels of the City's households, and the desire of many suburbanites to live in the City in which they work. A large developer response to this market potential is already evident. From 1960 to 1972 some 17,000 new dwelling units for middle and upper income families were constructed.



Presently some 15,000 dwelling units for this population group are under construction, planned or proposed. A preliminary 10-year target and program design for 40,000 new dwelling units for middle and upper income families is being formulated.

(iii) Upgrading and Rehabilitation of the City's Existing Housing Stock

The City is presently putting together an ambitious program for upgrading the existing housing stock. Since the early 1960's, some 10,000 dwelling units in urban renewal project areas have been rehabilitated. An estimated 10,000 dwelling units, in urban renewal areas, needing rehabilitation have been identified. There are an estimated additional 10,000 dwelling units, outside of urban renewal areas, susceptible to rehabilitation.

A range of complementary programs are underway or in the developmental stage. These include code enforcement programs, housing inspection, and a housing inspection information system, and a program for the early acquisition of tax delinquent housing.



A strategy for housing upgrading, by neighborhoods, involving complementary measures for upgrading public and private facilities and services, and meeting financing needs, is being formulated, in line with an in-depth evaluation of need. (See Table 12.)

(d) Open Space Planning

An ambitious program for parks and open space, and recreation facilities is being designed. Elements in the program include (i) neighborhood facilities, parks and playgrounds, (ii) acquisition of land for new local facilities, (iii) restoration of existing city-wide park systems and acquisition of new land, (iv) historic preservation, (v) environmental improvements, and (vi) recreation buildings. The program is estimated to cost \$100 million over a 10-year period. (See Table 13.)

(e) Manpower Training and Education Quality Upgrading

For some time now, Boston's employment problem has not been principally an insufficient number of jobs, but rather the mismatch of the occupational skills requirements of an expanding level of jobs, and the occupational skills attainment of the City's



disadvantaged labor force. Approaches to accommodation of the employment problem will require new efforts on both the demand and supply aspects; bringing new jobs to Boston to match the skills of the labor force, as well as upgrading the labor force to qualify for emerging job opportunities.

With the growth and structural change in Boston's economy, employment opportunities in the professional, clerical and service occupations are rising and expanding their share of the City's job mix. These three occupations account for virtually all of Boston's job growth in the 1960's and that projected for the 1970's. In contrast, the share of jobs in the operative and laborer occupations, concentrated primarily in manufacturing, is falling. In the 1970's, some growth is also foreseen for managerial, sales and craftsmen jobs.

Boston's resident labor force takes up less than half of all jobs in the City, and its share of the City's jobs has been declining.





Boston's resident labor force has been slowly, but not fully adapting to the changing occupational structure of job demand.

New approaches to manpower, training, and new ways of upgrading education quality, are under study with a view toward program formulation. (See Table 14.)

(f) Completion of Urban Renewal Project Area Plans

Boston's urban renewal program is in a mature stage of development with many project area programs nearing completion, and others well advanced in the planning and development stage.

An estimated \$110 million is required for completion, including a required \$80 million of Federal funds, principally for land acquisition and write-down.

In view of the possibility that Federal funds of this magnitude may not be available in the future, an assessment of priorities is currently underway. (See Table 15.)



### 3. Boston's Commitment to the Revitalization of Public Facilities

Since 1968 the City of Boston has been mounting an ambitious public facilities construction program to revitalize the City's capital plant and contribute to the upgrading of the City's urban amenities. To counter the long period of neglect of the City's public facilities, when an average annual expenditure of only \$20 million was made in the 1950-67 period, Boston has been constructing public facilities at an annual rate of \$50 million in the 1968-71 period. Currently, public facilities outlays are at a level of \$100 million a year.

For the future, the City of Boston is fashioning a large 10-year public facilities program, averaging an estimated \$130 million a year, to meet the needs of the City and its people. This program will provide for a broad range of facilities including schools, libraries, hospitals and health clinics, streets and lights, sewer and water works, the needs of urban renewal project areas, the requirements arising from new urban development and housing programs, open space, industrial development, and environmental protection and upgrading. (See Tables 16 and 17.)



A review of the fiscal feasibility of such a program suggests that it is well within the fiscal capacity of the City, taking into account the relative small impact of capital financing on current revenues, and Boston's low per capita indebtedness in comparison with cities of comparable size.

#### 4. Tourism Development

Tourism development is important to Boston as a source of jobs, income, and tax revenue, and as a stimulus to upgrade the City's historic landmarks, open space and recreation areas, and public facilities.

Currently, Boston receives an estimated 1.5 million out-of-state visitors a year, who generate 10,000 jobs directly, in the provision of lodging, and an estimated 50,000 jobs indirectly in the supply of other goods and services, and spend some \$200 million.

In 1975, when Boston will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Revolution, Boston is expected to have at least 4 million visitors who will generate



30,000 jobs directly, and an estimated 100,000 jobs indirectly, and spend some \$400-\$500 million. (See Table 18.)

The City is marshalling a far-reaching program for the bi-centennial celebration and the accommodation of the anticipated visitors.

5. New Approaches to Financing Urban Development, Public and Private, in Boston

The new planning and development effort will require major new approaches toward the financing of the public and private sector roles, and new financing strategies are being designed and formulated for this purpose.

These include the mobilizing of a larger private sector role in the financing of urban development, to offset the declining availability of Federal funds for urban renewal.

Also involved is the anticipation of the requirements of the Federal shift from categorical grants for specific projects to "revenue sharing" grants for community development.





There will also be a major new effort at state and local tax reform to provide larger State funding of programs for Boston.

Over and above these efforts, however, new techniques and strategies for financing urban development will be required. New ways of using existing devices will also be needed. New financing strategies are in the design and formulation stage.



## II. ROLE OF PARK PLAZA IN BOSTON'S PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CITY

Park Plaza has an important and key role in Boston's planning and development strategy to meet the needs of the City. Park Plaza is important to Boston for its contribution to housing, commercial and office development, public facilities revitalization, environmental upgrading, blight eradication, jobs, income, and tax revenue generated. But even more important is Park Plaza's significance for key aspects of Boston's planning and development strategy, including that for the City Core Area. Most important of all, perhaps, is the role of Park Plaza in forging an innovative and pioneering approach toward mobilizing the private sector financing role in urban development, in lieu of the drying up of Federal urban renewal money for land acquisition and write-down. Park Plaza's direct contribution to enhancing Boston as a place to live and a place to work is described elsewhere in this report. The purpose of this section is to identify Park Plaza's role in the City's planning and development strategy, and the far-reaching precedent it signifies in mobilizing the private sector to undertake the urban redevelopment financing effort heretofore provided principally by the Federal government.



Boston's strategy, as noted earlier, centers on assuring the fruition of favorable prospects for growth in service activities, and related job creation, income generation, and population upgrading, by providing the housing, the public facilities and the other urban amenities that would enhance Boston as a place to live, - aspects which had lagged behind the earlier and continuing progress of the City's economy. The City Core Strategy Planning and Development effort currently underway represents a major component of the City's strategy, whose successful fulfillment is designed to meet the vital needs of Boston. Park Plaza represents a key aspect of the implementation of the City Core Strategy. Without the key role of Park Plaza, the City Core Strategy could falter, endangering not only the prospects for the City, but those for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as well. Park Plaza is important for its economic development, job creation and income generation role in the City Core Strategy. Park Plaza is significant for its residential development role. Park Plaza is vital for its public facilities upgrading role. Park Plaza has an important environmental improvement role. Park Plaza would help assure the success of the role of the City Core



Strategy in making Boston a better place to live and to work.

Boston's City Core Strategy is counting on a large and expanding role of the private sector to finance urban development. Park Plaza is counted on to show the way this can be done.

In essence, Park Plaza is a key test to demonstrate the viability of Boston's strategy, planning and development effort for the City Core Area, and the feasibility of new approaches to downtown urban redevelopment.





development effort that encompasses both new opportunities for the City Core Area as both a place to live and a place to work, and a new potential for revitalizing and upgrading the City's neighborhoods. A corollary aspect centers on upgrading the population and labor force through improvements in education quality and manpower training. This strategy is already in the early stages of implementation. A planning and development process, already underway, is marshalling ambitious, new identified programs and projects. The strategy comprises the following principal elements.

1. Assure Fruition of the Economic Prospects for Growth in Jobs and Income

Boston's prospects for growth in jobs and income is outstanding. The City's economy may be expected to have a large and expanding role in those service activities experiencing rapid growth nationally. Modest but important targets for recovering some manufacturing jobs can also be achieved with the role of Boston's Economic Development and Industrial Commission. Current private sector commitments for investment and building confirm the outlook for significant economic



growth over the next five years.

To assure the achievement of Boston's potential, the City must undertake a major effort to enhance economic prospects by making the City an attractive place to live as well as to work. Some horrendous fiscal problems must also be solved.

Boston has the possibility of achieving very ambitious economic goals. (See Table 8.)

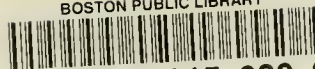
2. Launch a Major New City-Wide Urban Planning and Development Effort to Upgrade the City as a Place to Live.

Boston needs and can carry out a major new city-wide urban planning and development effort combining a broader horizon for commercial, residential, and environmental development of the City Core Area with a new approach toward the revitalization and upgrading of the City's neighborhoods. This will involve a broadening of the earlier concentration on urban renewal project area planning, without neglecting continuing needs. (See Exhibit 9.) The new city-wide urban planning and development effort includes the following aspects.





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